

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8613
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAN SALVADOR 3282

FOR A/SY VERNE ST. MARS

PANAMA FOR RSS

E.O. ;1652: N/A
TAGS: APER, ASEC, ES
SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL SY OFFICER POSITIONS, SAN SALVADOR

REF: STATE 156111

1. COM PROTECTIVE DETAIL SAN SALVADOR AT PRESENT INCLUDES ASSISTANT REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICER CHIOCCO PLUS THREE SA'S WHO ROTATE IN AND OUT APPROXIMATELY EVERY FIVE WEEKS. THIS VERY USEFULLY COMBINES CONTINUITY OF CHIOCCO ASSIGNMENT WITH DIFFERING APPROACHES AND CONSTANTLY FRESH INSIGHTS OF ROTATING SPECIAL AGENTS.
 2. AS REFTTEL SUGGESTS, THREAT CONDITIONS HERE CONTINUE UNABATED AND IF ANYTHING ARE WORSE NOW THAN BEFORE.
 3. PARA 2 REFTTEL DESCRIBES VERY WELL ADVANTAGES CONTEMPLATED FROM CONVERSION OF 3 TDY TO 3 PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED PERSONNEL.
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4. ON OTHER HAND, I HAVE BEEN MADE AWARE OF STRONGLY DISSENTING VIEWS BY SOME NON-SY MEMBERS OF THE STAFF. SO THAT YOU MAY GIVE THESE ALL DUE CONSIDERATION, LET ME LIST THEM AS FOLLOWS:

A. COST-SAVING ASPECT IS CHALLENGED ON GROUND

THAT IT IS ILLUSORY TO THINK ENTIRE FAMILIES CAN BE TRANSFERRED TO SAN SALVADOR AND MAINTAINED HERE FOR LESS THAN SINGLE PERSONNEL, EVEN TAKING INTO ACCOUNT COSTS OF ROTATION;

B. BURN-OUT FACTOR: THIS SUGGESTS THAT THE PACE AT WHICH THE SY DETAIL WORKS IN SAN SALVADOR AND THE TENSIONS ATTENDANT UPON ITS MEMBERS ARE TOLERABLE FOR A 5-6 WEEK PERIOD BUT NOT FOR A YEAR OR MORE;

C. IRREGULAR HOURS AND MOVEMENTS REQUIRED OF SY DETAIL MEMBERS WOULD INTERFERE WITH AND PRECLUDE NORMAL FAMILY LIFE; WHILE THIS IS EQUALLY TRUE IN US, POINT MADE TO ME IS THAT FAMILY MEMBERS THERE ARE IN THEIR OWN ENVIRONMENT AND CAN BETTER COPE WITH SITUATION THAN IN THE ARTIFICIAL AND FOREIGN CLIMATE OF EL SALVADOR WHERE NORMAL CONTACT WITH NEIGHBORS AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY IS LESS FEASIBLE;

D. GIVEN THE CLOSENESS AND CONTINUITY OF SY DETAIL OPERATION, A POORLY SLECTED MEMBER COULD POSE A PROBLEM OF INCOMPATIBILITY AND OPERATION RISK OF A YEAR OR MORE'S DURATION.

5. I WOULD APPRECIATE SY GIVING SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THE NET BALANCE OF THESE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FACTORS, AND I AM PREPARED TO GO ALONG WITH WHATEVER DECISION IT MAY REACH ON OBJECTIVE TECHNICAL GROUNDS. MY OWN VOTE WOULD BE FOR CONVERTING TO PERMANENT POSITIONS, SUBJECT TO PARA 8 BELOW.

6. HOUSING WOULD BE SAME PROBLEM FOR SY PERMANENT ASSIGNEES AS FOR OTHER PERSONNEL ASSIGNED HERE. OFFICERS ACCOMPANIED BY DEPENDENTS MIGHT FIND QUARTERS AT OR NEAR QUARTERS LIVING ALLOWANCE LEVEL. SINGLE OFFICERS WOULD FIND THIS MORE DIFFICULT AND MIGHT WISH TO SHARE A HOUSE OR APARTMENT AMONG THEMSELVES.

7. TIMING OF CHANGEOVER COULD BE AT DEPARTMENT'S CONVENIENCE AND WOULD NOT BE A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO US.

8. WHILE I WOULD BE GLAD TO ACCOMMODATE SY IN EFFECTING SUCH A CHANGEOVER, I HOPE IT WOULD ONLY BE ON THE BASIS OF THREE NEWLY CREATED POSITIONS. IF NOT, ARA WOULD HAVE TO MAKE DIFFICULT DECISION AS TO WHETHER ANY THREE EXISTING SLOTS COULD BE DIVERTED TO THIS PURPOSE. SHOULD ITS ANSWER BE NEGATIVE, I WOULD BY

ALL MEANS WANT TO CONTINUE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT BASED
ON TDY ASSIGNMENTS.
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